1 Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

At times, one comes across an unusually good road system in what would at first seem to be an isolated area and learns, as in the case of the area south of Volos, that emigrants from these communities, who went to Egypt, sent back large sums of money for the construction of these roads, which were built at heavy cost per kilometer because of the great amount of masonry work needed. Near Xourichti, in this same area, we came across a small unpadlocked building on the main road connected by a path with the village seen in the distance. We learned that this was the place where villagers left their money and orders for purchases desired from Volos. When a truck driver passed that way he would stop, pick up the money and the orders, and do the necessary shopping in Volos. When he came back he would leave the purchases in the little house, perhaps toot his horn or flash his lights, and people from the village would come to get their new possessions. There were no thefts, no shortchanging, in this area of mutual trust where, before World War II, it was safe for a young woman to walk anywhere through the mountains at night unattended.

In Epirus, across Greece from this Volos area, life is lived in a different historical and physical setting. In order to learn what effect a new road had upon village people there, we went to the village of Tsepelovo. On August 20, 1952 — only a few months prior to our visit — the first automobile had arrived at the village, using the road that had been built to open up a large forest to be exploited for the people's benefit. As we sat in the office of the community council and talked to the village secretary, we learned what the road had already accomplished for this village. The first advantage mentioned was the lowered transportation costs, for the hauling charges per oka (2.8 pounds) by truck are only one fifth or one fourth of those by donkey. When pressed to give other results, the secretary put it this way:

> Now we can build homes with sand and cement; formerly it was too expensive to carry these in by animals. Formerly we built our stone houses with lime and mud as mortar, and that is why they tend to crumble so quickly. Here we produce about 14,000 okas (about 20 tons) of walnuts each year. We received little for them because of the transportation charges; now the merchant comes here in a truck and pays us cash and gives a higher price. Today we can also sell our lumber because, before the road came, we couldn't very well strap long boards to the donkeys.
>
> We used to spend twelve-and-a-half hours going by animal to Ioannina, the only large city nearby. Now we do it in two-and-a-half hours by car. The grocer can sell fresh goods, whereas formerly he had only staples. Although we had great riches here, we also had great poverty so that beggars would go from house to house. The road reduces this inequality. Many of our men who had no other income earned much money working on the construction.
>
> In case we get sick we can be carried down by car and not have to ride a donkey.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

When walking through a mountain village, one often looks from an upper lane down upon several tiers of houses beneath, since the buildings compactly hug the slope vertically rather than stretch in a narrow row at the same level. This gives a good opportunity to observe the roof types, one of the simplest ways used by Greek folklorists in the classification of village homes. There are, in general, two main types of roof: the sloping, which predominates on the mainland, and in which the slopes from either side of the central roof beam may or may not be of equal length. If they are equal, one has the eagle type or saddle-back type. The second general type is the flat roof, called *doma,* found chiefly on the islands and characteristically Mediterranean. The houses with a sloping roof can be further divided into two types: the one-story house of the plains and the two-story house of the mountains. These types have been well described by George A. Megas and Angelike Chatzemichale, as well as by other students of Greek architecture.

The peasant, of course, will not tell you that his house is of the two-story, sloping-roof type. Instead, he will want to show you where he carries on his daily activities after he has served you some refreshment in the part of the house reserved for such honors. He will introduce you to some of the domestic animals almost as though they were members of the family; he will show you how his wife makes bread and will call to her, "Helene, come out here and show our guest how you put the loaves into the oven." He will want you to see the few tools he uses in repairing a wagon, an implement, or a piece of harness. Now and then, if the scenery warrants it, he will stop and show you the view and ask you if you ever gazed upon a more beautiful sight. He will apologize for the mud in the yard, reminding you, "we are just village folk and this is just a village home." When he tells his daughter to get busy at the homemade loom to show you how she weaves the coarse cloth, he will casually ask, "Do women in America weave as pretty cloth as our women in Greece?"

Should his house be one of the few with a flush toilet or with a homemade privy superior to the others in the village, this may be the first wonder he will proudly display. There is no rhyme or reason to the tour of the small farm, nor should there be. Somewhere en route, perhaps while one is still enjoying the sweets offered upon arrival, the family photographs will be passed around, special attention being centered upon the young man living in Chicago, Los Angeles, or Pittsburgh, who regularly sends remittances back to his family — or at least he did until he married an American wife. One is immediately aware that this is a home, a place where people live rather than merely a house consisting of building materials fashioned into some kind of suitable pattern.

Nevertheless, anyone interested in carrying away some lasting impression of a Greek home needs to pay attention to the house itself. I was fortu-

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

sacrifices necessary to keep an academically talented son in the gymnasium are undertaken with enthusiasm, because such a son gives promise both of increasing the income of his family and of raising its social position.

Although not all of Vasilika's boys who start the gymnasium have sufficient talent or self-discipline to complete the course, a majority of them do so and give observable evidence of the feasibility of sending boys for advanced schooling. In 1959, of the thirty-four boys and young men who were between the ages of twelve and thirty and who were also sons of farmers, sixteen had attended or were then attending gymnasium, and three of the sixteen had received or were still receiving some education at a higher level. By 1961, as we have seen, a shepherd's boy had completed a year in gymnasium. Whether all these sons will succeed in finding employment commensurate with their educational qualifications depends, of course, on the economic development of the nation, and especially on the increased possibilities for employment in the towns and in Athens. In Vasilika each educated young man and his family hope that he will not have to return to the village to live.

The pattern of educating sons is not a new one in the village. With few exceptions, the groups of middle-aged brothers and of young adult brothers and sisters in the village in 1961 could boast of one additional brother who was living in a town or in Athens, and each of these men had had some education beyond the village school. There were also two men in this age group who were living in the village but had had some gymnasium training.

A second solution to the problem of surplus sons well known in the history of Greece has been emigration out of the country itself. In the decade between 1910 and 1920 about four young men left Vasilika for the United States. One of these returned to fight in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and has lived in the village ever since. The other three are still in the United States. In the 1930's, one man left with his wife and child for Tanganyika. The extent of continuing association with these overseas relatives is different in each case; one man returned to Vasilika to visit his brother in the early 1950's and stayed for only a year; another wrote sporadically; a third disappeared and his son knew only that he had died in the States. The Tanganyika relatives, however, continually sent packages to their village cousins, and the son of the original emigré, who had died, returned to the village with his mother in 1959. The villagers always referred to the packages from Tanganyika as gifts from America and referred to the Tanganyikan, even after his return, as "the American." Apparently, the word "America" in the village is a generic term for an El Dorado abroad. However, emigration out of the country is not currently of interest to the villagers; no one in the village ever asked us for help in arranging the emigration of one of their sons to the United States, though joking references to our taking young people back with us were not uncommon.

Up to this point, then, we may conclude that the system of equal inheritance of property and the villagers' approval of urban living have led to an actual geographical movement of young men out of Vasilika and to a social movement into occupations other than farming for young men who have grown up in the rural settlement. Another aspect of the situation is that income from

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

floor of the village president's cottage with a great fire burning at our feet. The parish priest had been awaiting us in the square, and after I had photographed the ruins of the church he rang the great bell which hung from the branches of a plane tree and the whole community gathered to sing the first vespers of the feast of St. Athanasius the Great, in a chapel which had been disused for generations and had only been repaired since the return of the refugees the previous autumn. No more than forty families had as yet found their way back to the village and the destruction was very great. The next morning it was raining heavily and the mud lay so deep in the tiny chapel that planks had to be laid down to facilitate the movements of the celebrant.

Papa Georgios Papageorgiou was himself a native of Chrysomelia. He had been ordained in the early days of the war after living for a time in the monastery of St. Stephen on the windy heights above Kalambaka. His first parish had been wiped out of existence by the Germans, and now the Lord Cherubim, Metropolitan of Trikka and Staghi, had sent him to this ruined hamlet, deep in the folds of Pindos. He lived with his 'priestess' and their four children in a wretched hovel roofed with corrugated iron a little way below the church and, in the absence of a schoolmaster, was himself acting as a temporary *didaskalos*.

We spent a night at the village of Vanakoulia on our way back to Kalambaka. When we arrived the whole population seemed to be engaged in the task of setting up a school in the narthex of the church: a severe structure only lately completed. Over the doorway was set a rough inscription in rustic Greek commemorating the destruction of the church by the Germans and its subsequent rebuilding by the inhabitants—aided, as we later discovered, by generous gifts from relatives in America.

DESTROYED BY GERMANS

1943

REBUILT

AT THE EXPENSE OF THE INHABITANTS

JUNE 1949

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Paleo Corinthos

[Villages of the Plains]

lished by 1952. Through their instrumentality a series of important changes have come to the agriculture of the village. Fertilizer, bought through the cooperatives, has played its usual role in increasing wheat yields. In addition, a new variety of wheat has been introduced by the agricultural extension agent; this has still further increased the harvest, so that in 1956 the farmers counted on between 200 and 300 okes of wheat per stremma, compared with their prewar expectation of 80 to 100. The co-ops also have been able to buy two tractors and two harvesting machines that cultivate all the crop land of the community. These machines are hired out to neighboring villages when not needed in Old Corinth, and bring in a fair sum of money.

The most significant step, however, has been the drilling of irrigation wells. Irrigation began on a modest scale before the war, but in 1947 fuel for the pumping engines was hard to come by and many of the thirty wells the village then possessed were not used fully. By 1956 the number of wells and pumps had increased to 163, and all were in full use. Most of the suitable land in the village has come under irrigation. On this land, the villagers raise garden vegetables, especially tomatoes, and despatch them daily to the Athens market by truck. The result, in terms of money income, is spectacular. I was assured that a farm now yields ten times the income it supplied before the war.

Old Corinth has also benefited from the revival of tourism. In 1955, some 72,000 tourists visited the archaeological museum and the ruins on the outskirts of the village; and most of these visitors left at least some small change behind them in one of the coffee houses or in the new tourist restaurant which the government constructed in 1955. Moreover, Old Corinth lies near the new electric power line. Electricity came to the village for the first time in 1956. Of all the changes benefiting them in

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Kotta

[Hill Villages]

ventured into territory controlled by the Greek army or police. Resentment against the Greek authorities was widespread, although one man in the village, in speaking to me privately, made it clear that he at least did not like to contribute to the upkeep of the guerrilla garrison that controlled the village.

The population of the village was 630 persons, of whom over 200 were under fifteen years of age. Thus there was about one fifth of an acre of agricultural land per head, land that was miserably poor to begin with. Clearly the village could not live on its agriculture; and even when it had been safe to graze sheep on the barren mountain slopes, as it was not in 1947, the village still could not begin to maintain itself on local resources. The villagers calculated that they could produce food for about four months in the year; the deficit had to be made good outside.

In prewar years two means had been found to make ends meet. The men of the village were accomplished masons, and traveled far and wide over Greece seeking work as builders. In addition, they found work in various sorts of heavy construction – road building, irrigation works and the like. But in 1947 such jobs were not to be had, at least not by men with a Slavic accent.

The second, and perhaps more important, resource was remittances from abroad. The village had begun to send men overseas, mainly to Canada and Australia, even before the first world war. During the interwar years, the migration had continued despite growing barriers to free movement. In Toronto, Canada, and in Sydney, Australia, natives of Kotta had founded regular little colonies, and the members of these emigrant groups, all of whom were related to one another in some degree, helped to finance the continued emigration. Each family expected to send at least one son overseas, and that son was in turn expected to send back enough of his earnings to keep his parents fed and clothed, and to help out his brothers and sisters who stayed home.

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Kotta

[Hill Villages]

who stayed home. When the Greek army interrupted communication with the outside world this vital supply of cash was cut off. In 1947, therefore, the villagers were trying to spread out four months' food over the twelve months of the year.

Their diet was cornbread and little else. Nearly all of their sheep, whose milk had once helped to correct the deficiencies of a maize diet, had been slaughtered during the occupation; and the prevalence of skin diseases and a certain lassitude in their movements clearly indicated that malnutrition was added to undernourishment. They missed salt more acutely than anything else. There had been none in the village for several weeks when I was there.

Kotta remained in guerrilla hands until August 1949. It was luckier than some of its neighboring communities inasmuch as there was no fighting in the immediate environs, so that the houses of the village escaped without more than casual damage. But the villagers could not escape from famine, nor from disease that naturally followed in the wake of prolonged and drastic undernourishment. When I returned in 1956, the population of the village had shrunk to 188, less than one third of what it had been in 1947. The average number of persons per family had declined to 2.4, whereas in 1947 families with fewer than three children were a rarity and five or six children per family was closer to the average.

About one hundred of the former inhabitants of the village were simply missing. They had gone off, in desperation, looking for food or safety and had not come back. Most, presumably, had died or been killed. In addition, the village priest said that about fifty of the village men were known to have been killed while serving with the guerrillas; and five families had moved west across the Albanian frontier in 1949 when the guerrilla retreat took place. But the largest single factor in the decline of population was the removal of the village children by the guer-

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957

EH1 Greece EH1

Kotta

[Hill Villages]

rillas. A total of 225 children, between the ages of two and twelve, had been taken north in the early stages of the war, and only three had returned. A few letters had come from some of them, originating in places as remote as Turkestan, Poland and Czechoslovakia; but most had not been heard from, and no one in the village knew whether they were alive or dead.

The evacuation of the village children may well have been conceived by the guerrilla authorities as a humanitarian measure. Considering the state of the village as I saw it in 1947, such an interpretation seems quite plausible. This was not the way the bereft parents viewed the matter, however. They gave no very coherent explanation of why the children were taken, but the abduction was remembered in 1956 as the greatest crime the guerrillas committed. Not a few parents have been left childless, and this, by traditional village standards, is a bitter disaster. Who will look after them in their old age?

Still another factor in the drastic depopulation of Kotta has been emigration. As soon as communications with the outside world became possible again, relatives rallied round in Toronto and Sydney, and helped a total of fifty-six persons to emigrate. The process is still going on. When I visited the village in 1956, a young man and his mother were on the verge of departure for Australia, where they would join cousins who were financing the voyage.

Yet in spite of the sorrows which have visited every family in the village, and in spite of the terrible suffering all have been through, the spirit of the village in 1956 seemed amazingly relaxed and calm – almost happy. The survivors gave the impression of being profoundly surprised to find themselves still alive. But what is more important, everyone now has enough to eat. The village land can feed the population; there is now no need to look for work outside; and remittances from abroad permit some families to indulge in small luxuries – kerosene lamps, f[illegible] example.

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1

665 ciency, since the more voices that have to reach agreement
645 upon any policy, the more difficult it is to decide anything.
662 Hence the size of Greek cabinets has fluctuated very markedly since World War II, from over twenty-five to less than fifteen members. But even when a cabinet was made unwieldy by the effort to include as many potential supporters as possible, there were always more disappointed than successful candidates; and to such discontented persons it was a standing temptation to break party lines and vote the government down in the Chamber of Deputies on any convenient issue. In the ensuing cabinet reshuffle they might always hope to do better, having proved their indispensability to the government by unseating it.

665 Second, the opposition was always in the position of being
666 able to criticize without suggesting specific and practicable alternatives. It was easy to denounce half measures, to attack policies limited by the availability of money or of physical resources, to criticize the gaps between promises and actual achievements. The fact that much of what was thus attacked could not have been done much differently by anyone in power made little difference, since the opposition was not seriously concerned with what could or could not be done. Most politicians out of office were inclined to feel that any stick with which to beat the government, even a rotten one, was better than silence, so long as the stick hurt.

[663] The irrelevance of much of the language of political debate to the real, underlying problems of Greek society was easy to criticize from the outside. Yet a sober technical discussion of what the government could and should accomplish, of relative priority among the many desirable projects, and of long-range policies calculated to relieve overpopulation and underemployment lacked all political appeal.

471 The difficulty was that Greece faced a formidable political-
457 psychological problem. If large-scale investment on the basis
648
663

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1

of local resources were to occur, then restriction of current consumption would be necessary. Money and goods would have to be diverted from consumption to capital construction. Without such diversion, the country was condemned to chronic poverty, unless foreign investment and financing came to the rescue. Up to 1956 Greece had indeed depended upon foreign investment for its capital development; but the United States Congress could scarcely be counted upon to continue its support indefinitely. In fact, between 1954 and 1956 it became clear that American aid to Greece was to be shaped by more narrowly conceived American interests, which would mean that military subsidy and the disposal of surplus American agricultural products would take precedence over industrial or any other sort of capital investment in Greece. Moreover, a Greek government that depended upon American bounty would necessarily surrender a large portion of its effective sovereignty, as happened between 1947 and 1952. Such a policy would expose Greek authorities to charges of acting as craven "yes men" to the Americans, and of betraying Greek national interests, as, for instance, in Cyprus.

Dependence upon foreign funds to finance capital development was therefore a poor substitute for financing such development from local resources. Yet no one in Greece wanted to reduce and few wished to restrict the standard of living. The general public was impatient of austerity and wanted an immediate and miraculous increase in consumption levels. The chronic disbalance of the governmental budget reflected (among other factors) the pressure of these demands – demands for higher pensions and salaries, for better unemployment, medical and old-age benefits, and the like. To offer present hardship in the hope of future amelioration of economic conditions was therefore politically unthinkable, even though this was the only program that could really cope with the prob-

805 person is also just arriving, or, if they find him gone, they usually accept the fact with neither apology nor frustration.

STANDARD OF LIVING

511 The standard of living is set, not by a scheme, but by the needs of the person, shaped and channelled by family role, as well as by [177] disdain for softness and love of simplicity. Greeks do not budget, except for a very few who like to follow American ways. They spend not according to what they have, but according to the order of what [597] they want, and, on principle, they should want little. Simplicity and frugality are expressions of fortitude and self-discipline, and they are also really enjoyed as dimensions of living. Greeks are not motivated by the thought of great or vague or schematic future benefits; however, since the family is central to all planning, and since it extends into the future, Greeks try to see to it that there are means for the education of the son or the dowry of the daughter, or for an added field or a gold ornament for the wife. They have no faith in the future, and know that it will not take care of itself. So, as a rule, they buy only what they can pay for now and will not expand either business or standard of living on the basis of future profits.

[426] Greeks go in debt for subsistence and what they consider necessities. They do not like to borrow for luxuries, or for the creation of wealth. If they have enough for necessities, then any rise in income is sheer surplus. It does not have to go towards relieving the strain on the budget, or to pay a dreaded instalment on a radio, and, as a rule, [262] it does not raise the standard of living. The Greek likes his life; he does not see why he should give up his lunch of cheese and bread, or his delicious *commatiasta* (stews) just because now he can afford roast lamb every day. Such things belong to festive occasions. The surplus will be put back into the business, or saved intact for the family, or given in beneficence.

511 556 457 The wealthy Greek "of good family", that is, who has been properly brought up, is not distinguished by luxurious living, since luxury is soft and ostentatious. He is distinguished by his gifts to his country or village, by the battleship or stadium that bears his name, the village fountain or health centre which he established for his district. Large sums of money are sent annually to Greece by its emigrated sons for these purposes, as well as for the support or education or dowering of relatives, by people whose wives do their own housework. Greece has counted on these sums as an important source of income, and the economy of Greece now suffers from the effects of restricted emigration, since American-born Greeks lose contact with their parents' country, and fewer such sums are now being sent back.